

CENTER SCENE



The Bureau of Land Management Service Center Newsletter

August 1987

Message from the SC Director

We're hearing some positive things about the SC these days. There seems to be a renewed focus to our efforts. The ALMRS project is one of the President's 17 major automation efforts in 1989. There is a heightened understanding of the value of our corporate data to the nation at large—the context for the Bureau's overall automation strategy. Some dramatic changes are in the offing. You have a big piece of that excitement.

We know what comes of dreaming impossible dreams and of imaging what ought to be. We're the Service Center. More than dreamers we're doers. We don't wait for good ideas to come along, we go find them. We nurture them to fruition.

We fill in the blanks with new technology. We may begin with a dream but we don't discount the role of hard work and sheer determination in our success.

We are not driven to do everything that can be done. We are dedicated to doing a few things extremely well. I'm so proud of you.

(Bob Moore)

Map Makers

The world's first cartographers drew maps on the ground with sticks using twigs or pebbles to mark locations. Knowing how to locate another camp or source of food and water was necessary for survival. As their knowledge of the world around them advanced, their need for more detailed maps increased, and their skill as map makers improved. The maps began depicting not only the visible features, such as camps and rivers, but also the invisible ones such as borders and ownership of the land.

Today's cartographers are highly skilled and educated in the science and art of map making. Some of these modern day map makers can be found right here at the SC in the Division of Technical Services. This unit has complete in-house capabilities to create almost any type of map. The heart of the Division's map making

capabilities lies within the Branch of Cartography where cartographers and cartographic technicians develop thematic maps depicting such things as surface-subsurface ownership status, Wilderness Areas and off-road vehicle/recreation use areas. Once these maps are designed and produced the job is not over; however, all of these products require constant updating due to changes in ownership policy and new developments in land use.

The traditional methods of map construction such as compiling, plotting, scribing and negative engraving are time-honored skills, acquired only through extensive experience and education. However, since updating of these maps creates such a large impact on the Branch in regards to labor and storage of original plates, manual methods are gradually being converted to a digital system using various components of the Bureau's Geographic Information System (GIS).

Modern cartography combines the skill of mapmakers with the capability of high-tech computers. The basic components of an automated system are software and hardware. The framework of GIS is software developed to facilitate the capture, manipulation and plotting of cartographic data. Included with this software are utility programs such as Parcel Generator and PCCS. Further development in software is in progress to maximize efficiency of the Automated Mapping Program.

Hardware used by the Branch of Cartography includes graphic terminals, high resolution digitizing tablets and the Branch's newest acquisition, a precision flat-bed plotter from Kongsberg, Norway. This plotter can scribe, plot in ink, negative engrave and photographically expose film, all at many times the speed of manual methods and within tolerances of one thousandth of an inch. This hardware/software combination will enable BLM to create a data base so that map updates are all handled efficiently through automated procedures.

From sticks and stones to digital data with .001" accuracy, cartography has grown in leaps and bounds. The biggest problem with cartography today is keeping pace with technology.

River Studies

Over the last year, the SC has coordinated major river studies in Alaska and Arizona. The purpose of both studies is to relate river resource values to water conditions and develop recommendations for the acquisition for instream flow water rights. Once acquired, the rights will help assure that sufficient amounts of water are left in each stream to preserve the values which resulted in their receiving national recognition. Both studies were developed by interdisciplinary teams, with members representing key resource values, physical factors, and legal issues.

Beaver Creek

Beaver Creek is a large north-flowing tributary to the Yukon River in central Alaska. Its inclusion into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System was based upon primitiveness, excellent grayling fishing, aesthetic qualities, outstanding canoeing, wildlife in the river corridor, and recreational opportunities. Primary river resource values are all dependent to some degree on stream flow levels. The Beaver Creek study looked at relationships between flows and river values, and the effects of flows on channel and flood plain features. A recommendation was made to apply for an instream flow water right from the State of Alaska.

San Pedro River

The San Pedro River flows north into Arizona from Sonora, Mexico. Recently, BLM acquired 44,000 acres of land along 35 miles of the river so that valuable riparian ecosystems, historic and pre-historic ruins, and wildlife could be protected and managed for the public's enjoyment. Legislation is pending to designate it as a National Riparian Conservation Area. Water is key to the maintenance of the riparian attributes of the River. However, in recent years, water tables have dropped and base flows decreased, probably due to ground water pumping for domestic and agricultural uses. The study is evaluating the interdependency of surface water flows and riparian water conditions, developing recommendations for the acquisition of water rights and the management of ground water resources.

Super Summer Employees

Imagine that you are a 13-year-old Vietnamese escaping from Communist South Vietnam. You and 12 family members and friends are crowded on board a 40-foot fishing boat several miles off the coast, waiting for your mother to bring food and supplies. Minutes, then hours pass, but your mother is nowhere in sight. Finally, reluctantly, you head out for the open seas and whatever lies beyond, with only a handful of rice to feed 13 people.

For Mai Nguyen, a Summer Youth Program employee in Office Services, this dramatic scenario is a real memory. Mai and her family ultimately found themselves on a small island off the coast of Malaysia. They were among the lucky ones—they had met a Taiwanese fishing boat and were given food and directions. Several months later, Mai's mother, who had been detained by the Communists, escaped and joined the family. After a year in the Malaysian refugee camp, the Nguyen family came to the United States and settled in Denver.

Mai is one of eight young people working in the Division of Administrative Services through the Jefferson County Employment and Training Service's Summer Youth Program. This federally funded but locally administered program gives individuals who traditionally have difficulty in entering the job market an opportunity to learn personal and professional skills. According to Chrys Van Alstine, Program Coordinator, the experience includes actual work, workshops on locating jobs and being interviewed, and even a 3-day wilderness confidence-building course. The need to stay in school and to develop good work habits is emphasized.

Mai, a student at Red Rocks, plans to transfer to USC, earn a degree in business, and ultimately own her own business. "I like to be my own boss," she says, with an unmistakable air of conviction. This attitude is shared by Chia Vang, a Laotian of Hmong descent whose family left Laos in 1977 because of the war. Chia's family crossed the Mekong River and lived in Thailand for 2 years before finding a sponsor in Denver and moving here. Chia does typing and filing in Office Services and hopes to learn about computers.

Chia works alongside Jeannine Thai, a

19-year-old Vietnamese, whose 18-year-old sister Oanh works in Finance. Because Jeannine's and Oanh's father was Chinese, they and their Vietnamese mother were allowed to leave Vietnam legally. The family spent 17 months in Hong Kong before coming to the U.S. under the sponsorship of an uncle.

Jeannine is studying accounting at UCD and Oanh will be a senior in high school.

Anna Wharton helps out in the Branch of Personal Property by imprinting credit cards, working with license plates, and doing miscellaneous typing. This is Anna's first work experience on her own and she is enjoying it. She would like to be a secretary someday.

Collette Simmons and Sonya Youngberg work in the mailroom. Collette goes to school part-time and works part-time. Once she earns her diploma, she wants to attend Warren Tech to learn a trade and then use the trade to earn money for college. She would like to work with computers eventually. Sonya is a junior in high school who is still undecided regarding future career plans. Sonya is looking forward to attending the wilderness seminar this summer.

Travas Harmon first heard of the Program from his sister and is spending this summer working with the SC Printed Materials Distribution Section. Travas is involved with all aspects of the PMDS operation—shipping, receiving, stocking, and inventory. He would like to drive a big semitrailer truck someday, so his experience here will be very useful.

The Summer Youth Program is a winner all the way around. Young people have the opportunity to learn and grow. BLM and other employers receive much needed assistance from these eager and talented youth. The positive experience being given program participants here at the SC will hopefully bring these deserving individuals one step closer to their dreams. (by Bob Woerner)

Having Trouble Communicating. . .

...to the DPs-8/70, Level-6, or PAY/PERS? That was yesterday, so forget it. No, the problem is now, so call the Data Communications Center, extension 4760. The person who answers the phone will quiz you, not to insult you, but rather to understand your trouble. (Who said, "Fat chance!") Once the trouble is understood and it seems to be a communication problem the Specialist

will continue to work with you to isolate the problem which can result from any of the following:

1. The terminal's or PC's Hardware, Software or Configuration
2. The cable
3. The MODEM
4. The Telephone Line
5. The Level-6
6. The Multiplexer
7. The Front-end computer Hardware or Software
8. The Data PBX
9. THE DPS 8/70 Hardware or Software
10. The Air Conditioning
11. The Power
12. None of the Above
13. Some of the Above
14. All of the Above

To help, you may be asked to perform various operations from the terminal over and over again. At this point your patience is important. Contrary to popular belief, the problem is not isolated by pulling one of the above from a hat while you are hitting the break-key over and over again. However, through years of lucky guessing and the use of a Ouija Board, most trouble can be isolated in a short time—10 to 240 minutes—with your assistance.

Many times a problem is resolved during the isolation process but it may have to be done during non-prime hours. Sometimes, outside help is needed, and that can come from AT&T, CASE, CODEX, Honeywell, Mountain Bell, RUR services, several media, or video training tapes. The probability, at this point, of fixing your problem is good. If it doesn't "stay fixed" it's important to call back.

The thing to remember is that the Communications Center is here to serve, so call, but remember collect calls are not accepted.

Financial Data Base

The Division of Finance has established a monthly ASPEN data base of all financial transactions. It contains all the information that is currently on the monthly audit trail. Any office can query this data base. For more information contact Tim Tafoya in the Division of Finance at FTS 776-6620.

Upcoming Event

Women's Equality Day Observance
August 25 Bldg. 50-West/Cent